As an educator, I feel very fortunate to be a member of the Western Pennsylvania Education Consortium. The collegiality and exchange of ideas provided at this Consortium is well worth the time, effort, and affordable price. I have never left one of our conferences without some new ideas, thoughts, or musings to share with my colleagues. My only regret is that more of my colleagues are unable to attend these conferences.

The most effective tool to disseminate information from these conferences is the WIKI. Jenn Smith and I immediately shared this WIKI with our respective departments. I know that several teachers have accessed this WIKI and used some of the provided ideas and resources. Most of the members of the English and Social Studies departments have reviewed and implemented some type of differentiation technique. This information was welcomed by my co-workers due to the emphasis on differentiated instruction this year by our administration.

Another idea that I shared with the Social Studies department was the Teaching with Primary Sources from the Library of Congress. Several members of that department were excited to know that due to our participation in W.P.E.C. they would be able to access materials from Waynesburg College. These teachers are looking for ways to improve our students’ nonfiction reading skills. These primary source materials are an appropriate and challenging way to work on these skills.

As I stated earlier, I am fortunate. I am currently in a position to attend these conferences. There are numerous staff members at East Allegheny who have never had the opportunity to participate in conferences of this caliber. These staff members are sometimes unaware that the issues we are dealing with are not exclusive to East Allegheny. Every district has issues and it is important to see, hear, and recognize that it is not just our district. As educators, we are all dealing with the similar issues and causes. We have to find a way to improve and control what we can in our classrooms, buildings, and districts.